

Prof. Willibald Ruch, Ph.D. - Character strength and the good (work) life.

Professor Willibald Ruch. Willibald Ruch is chair of the section of personality and assessment at the University of Zürich, Switzerland. He received his PhD from the University of Graz, Austria and after his habilitation at the University of Düsseldorf (Germany) he held a Heisenberg fellowship awarded by the German Research Council (DFG). He has authored about 350 journal articles and book chapters and co-edited and co-written five books.

Willibald is co-editing or on the editorial board of several journals (including Journal of Individual Differences, Journal of Research in Personality, Journal of Positive Psychology, Personality and Individual Difference), and is a co-editor of two book series. Currently he is working on positive psychology traits (e.g., character strengths and virtues; cheerfulness, humor) in adults and children/adolescents and their role in contributing to the good life. He is the founder and past president the Swiss Positive Psychology Association (www.swippa.ch), IPPA Fellow (class of 2015) and senior scientist at the VIA Institute of character.

Due to Allport's (1927) claim that character is merely personality evaluated (and personality is character devalued) and personality alone will do, "character" had largely been neglected when exploring individual differences. This changed with the emergence of positive psychology, which brought a renaissance of the concept of character on personality psychology. Early in the search for the roots of a good life, character was rediscovered as key to investigating and fostering subjective, objective and societal fulfillment. In 2004 the VIA classification of strengths and virtues was put forward and instruments for the measurement of the 24 character strengths were presented (i.e., the VIA-IS and the VIA-Youth). The research in our lab related to testing fundamentals of the model, predicting important life outcomes, and examining whether character strengths can be trained. Some attention will be given to the work place. Data will be presented that show that strengths predict work satisfaction and job performance over and above personality and general mental ability.